(c) if so, by when Government would establish an Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in Gujarat;

(d) whether there is a target to establish a number of Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in the country during the Eleventh Five Year Plan; and

(e) if so, how many and where they are going to be established?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (e) The Government of India has set up three Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) at Pune, Kolkata and Mohali and is establishing two more IISERs at Bhopal and Thiruvananthapuram. These Institutes have been set up on the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, and in such a manner that they are distributed in all broad regions of the country. Gujarat falls in the western region for which an IISER has been established at Pune. At present, there is no proposal to set up more IISERs.

Online CAT examination

2818. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move to permit online CAT examinations similar to US examinations like GMAT and GRE, etc., which may help in handling the huge number of students appearing for the test every year;

(b) if so, what would be the *modus operandi* of the scheme with regard to ensuring the transparency; and

(c) whether Government proposes to extend this scheme to all other all India basis exams like Staff Selection Board exams, Railway Recruitment Board exams, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Committee of Chairpersons of the Admissions Committees of the Indian institutes of Management (IIMs)—CAT Group had recommended to the Institute to explore the possibility of conducting CAT on-lines of GMAT/GRE, etc. The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) At present, Staff Selection Commission (SSC) has no such scheme. In so far as Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) exams are concerned, they have already introduced On-line examinations where number of candidates is small/limited.

Suicide by school children

2819. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government has taken note of suicides being committed by school children failing in upper primary classes, particularly in Delhi;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to reform the present examination system so as to do away with annual examinations, at least till the Tenth Standard; and

(c) if so, by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) A few cases of suicides committed by students have been reported in Delhi.

(b) and (c) The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has directed its affiliated schools to introduce Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) upto Class VIII with no pass-fail criteria upto Class V. There are no external examinations upto Class IX in the schools affiliated with CBSE.

Vacancies in State universities

2820. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are 30 per cent of teaching positions in the country's Central and State universities lying vacant despite efforts by the Central Government and just 10 States have been asked to provide details of the number of teaching posts and vacancies in their colleges and universities;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons for lying these posts vacant; and

(c) what are the steps and efforts being made to fill all the vacancies of teaching in both Central and State universities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) According to the University Grants Commission (UGC), there are 1923 teaching posts out of 9261 teaching posts lying vacant in Central Universities as on 31/10/2007 (21 %). The Commission has so far collected information from 74 State Universities where 627 teaching positions are vacant as on 1/5/2007. The UGC has been advising all the Central Universities to fill up the vacant posts in Universities. It has also issued a circular (dated 23/3/2006) to all State Governments to fill up the vacant teaching posts as per norms of the Commission, because appointment of faculty on contract, part-time and as guest-faculty on long-term basis affects the quality of higher education. The Central Government has already increased the age of superannuation from 62 years to 65 years in respect of teachers of Centrally funded Technical and Higher Educational Institutions which come under the purview of Ministry of Human Resource Development to overcome the shortage of experienced teachers. The State Governments have also been requested to take similar action.

ITI National Central University

2821. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to open ITI National Central University in Orissa and in some other States;

(b) if so, what is the time-frame; and

(c) whether all universities would be opened during 2008?